

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Leveltek Incorporated

West Virginia Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Leveltek Processing Achieves Iso 9000 Certification

Client Profile:

Leveltek Processing employs approximately 30 people and operates a facility in Benwood, West Virginia. The company rolls and draws purchased steel, serving customers nationwide.

Situation:

Leveltek Processing (Leveltek) had two goals: to provide quality consistency in its products, and to expand into new markets. To achieve these goals, Leveltek decided to pursue ISO 9000 certification. ISO 9000 certification is a voluntary, global quality standard that requires facilities to document their processes and quality-related activities, monitor the overall system to ensure it is effective, and provide evidence of quality system management on a regular basis to a third-party registrar. However, the qualifications for ISO certification are stringent, and the process can be difficult without assistance. Leveltek contacted the West Virginia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (WVMEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for help preparing for ISO certification.

Solution:

WVMEP engaged a third-party specialist--Tri-State Quality Systems--to conduct an analysis of Leveltek procedures, identify gaps in its system, and provide recommendations for changes to existing processes to make them compliant to the global quality standard. This analysis provided the foundation for integrating existing practices into a formal quality management system. WVMEP managed the project logistics, budget, and timetables.

Leveltek, working with Tri-State Quality Systems, developed ISO-required documentation including a quality manual, procedures, and work instructions. The company also developed forms and lists to serve as objective evidence of quality system activities.

To educate all of Leveltek's employees on the newly created documentation and the requirements of the ISO standard, Tri-State Quality Systems provided training to every member of the staff. This training taught employees how to effectively monitor their processes to identify strengths and weaknesses in the quality system; how to track deficiencies and implement changes to correct problems and prevent potential problems; and how to document changes to the system over time.

Finally, Tri-State Quality Systems conducted a pre-assessment audit to help

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Leveltek prepare for the official registration audit. Since Leveltek achieved ISO 9000 certification, the company has been able to meet its two goals of standardizing product quality and entering new markets previously limited to ISO-certified competitors.

Results:

Documented processes to enhance training for employees.

Established consistent quality for product based on revised standardized practices.

Addressing problems expeditiously.

Increased overall productivity of the entire facility.

Testimonial:

"I have had the opportunity to work with the West Virginia Manufacturing Extension Partnership and Tri-State Quality Systems...to achieve ISO 9002:1994 registration and a better understanding of Quality Assurance. They...were instrumental in the planning, implementation, and registration process [and] have remained in contact with me to answer and help solve any questions or problems that may arise."

Troy Allman, Plant Manager